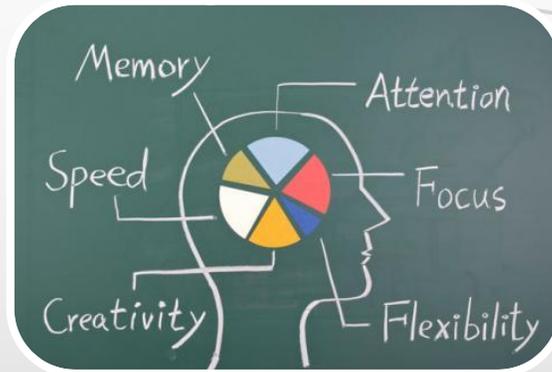


## Best Foot Forward

Test anxiety can just be a part of the exam taking process. But there are helpful ways to lower your anxiety beyond considering the food you eat.

- Get plenty of sleep: make sure your brain is well rested
- Drink lots of water: dehydration can break your concentration
- Avoid too much sugar: it can make you nervous and jittery
- Limit your caffeine intake: over compensating with too much caffeine can make you jumpy and loose concentration. Energy drinks can also carry dangerous or unknown side effects that can break your concentration

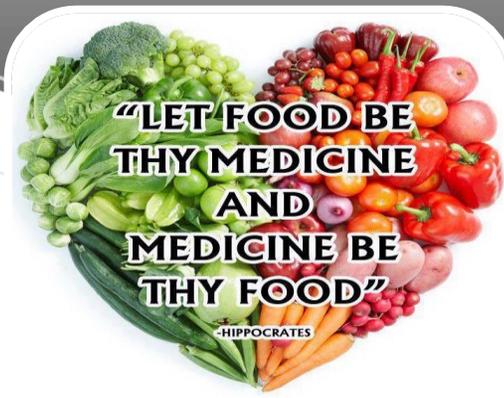


## Eating Before the Exam: Setting up for success

You have heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and that is certainly true on your big test days. Eating a nutritious breakfast or snacks can help boost focus, blood flow, energy level, lower stress, can help to promote healthy brain activity and will keep you full so you aren't hungry in the middle of your exams. Eating right on test days can help to ensure that your brain can perform to your best ability, so don't forget to pick the right foods before your next big test. And don't skip breakfast because your body and brain needs the fuel to run efficiently!



## Food for Thought & Brain Power



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To promote through collaboration, a healthy community, free of substance abuse for youth and those who live in, work in and /or visit Royal Oak

# Healthy Options & More Info



## Best Foods to Eat On Test Day

### Brain Boosting Foods

Foods rich in protein for mental alertness like eggs, nuts, yogurt, and cottage cheese

### Consider other "Brain Foods"

Foods that are thought to increase memory and promote faster cognition like oily fish (& fish oil), walnuts, blueberries, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, dried fruits, figs and dates, kale, spinach, parsley, cantaloupes, oranges, strawberries, blueberries, bananas, raw carrots, bell peppers, Brussels sprouts, avocados, broccoli, asparagus and dark chocolate

## 5 Best Brain Foods



**Oily Fish:**  
Salmon, mackerel, herring, and sardines (for example) are all high in Omega 3 which are essential for brain tissue development and maintenance



**Pumpkin Seeds:**  
Are also rich in Omega 3's, which is also shown to maintain sensory function in the brain



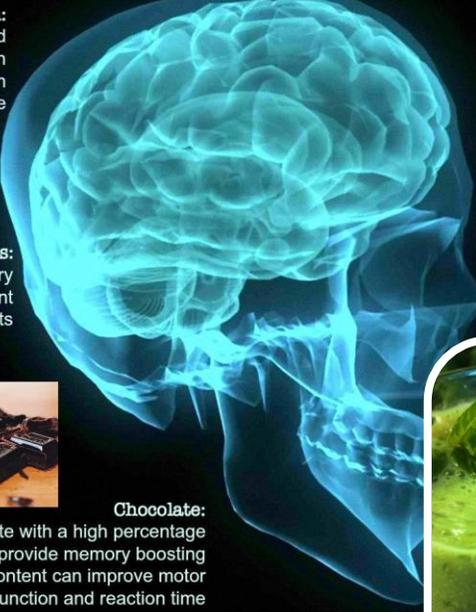
**Avocado:**  
Helps facilitate blood flow to the brain because of their high "good" fat and cholesterol contents which is essential for alertness and focus



**Blueberries:**  
Shown to improve short-term memory function because of their high antioxidant and vitamin C contents



**Chocolate:**  
High quality dark and milk chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa solids in it are known to provide memory boosting antioxidants while the milk content can improve motor function and reaction time



### Smoothies:

A great source of vitamins, nutrients, fiber, water, and an awesome start to your day: add your favorite "brain" fruits and veggies, yogurt, juice or soymilk, blend and enjoy the cognitive benefits!



## Some Thoughtful Suggestions...

**Walnuts-** considered the ultimate super food they are the only good nut source of alpha linoleic acid (ALA) that means they help promote blood flow, which in turn allows for efficient delivery of oxygen to the brain.

**Olive oil-** a great source of monounsaturated fats, which have been shown to actually slow brain aging.

**Berries-** Mental decline (specifically in memory and focus) is minimized with a diet high in berries.

**Fatty fish** (sardines, salmon, etc.)- brain boosters thanks to the omega-3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA, which have been linked to lower risk of dementia, improved focus and memory.

**Coffee-** Caffeine promotes mental acuity. Aside from its boosting effects, coffee's antioxidant richness helps maintain brain health

**Spinach-** rich in the antioxidant lutein; thought to help protect against cognitive decline. Women who reported eating the leafiest green and cruciferous vegetables had a markedly lower rate of cognitive decline, compared to those who ate the less.

**Dark Chocolate-** Antioxidant-rich & healthy for your whole body, its caffeine content is thought to play a role in maintaining mental sharpness and focus.

**Avocados-** full of monoun-saturated fats that improve vascular health and blood flow.

**Water-**When a person becomes dehydrated; their brain tissue actually shrinks. And several studies have shown that dehydration can affect cognitive function. Dehydration can impair short-term memory, focus and decision-making.

**Wheat germ-** rich vegetarian source of choline: a nutrient that is involved in the body's production of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that boosts memory.

**Beets-** a good source of naturally-occurring nitrates, which help improve blood flow to the brain.

**Garlic-** may help stave off some forms of brain cancer. Investigators found that the oregano-sulfur compounds in garlic actually worked to kill glioblastoma cells: a type of malignant tumor cell.

**Peppermint (oil)-** has been said to help with memory and alertness.

### Sources

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